(a) whether Government are aware of the fury of recent floods in Brahmputra Valley and Barak Valley;

(b) if so, how much damage has been caused to the life, property and crops;

(c) how much funds have been allotted for relief and rehabilitation work; and

(d) what is the progress of relief and rehabilitation work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) According to reports received from the Government of Assam two waves of floods in June and July, 1997 affected a population of 25.58 lakh in 17 districts, claimed 15 human lives and damaged 4770 houses and crops in an area of 1.08 lakh ha.

(c) Government of India have released two instalments of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund for 1997-98 amounting to Rs. 19.79 crores for relief and rehabilitation measures in the affected areas.

(d) The State Government is undertaking necessary relief and rehabilitation measures in the affected areas including operation of 193 relief camps and distribution of essential commodities like 26,000 Qtls. of rice, 2000 Qtls. of dal and 1,000 Qtls. of salt.

Areas covered under Operation Flood Programme

1878. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of villages/areas/districts could not be covered by the NDDB under the Operation Flood Programme even though sufficient quantity of surplus milk is available;

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken in the matter;

(c) whether the State Governments concerned have been consulted or are proposed to be consulted in framing the proposals for the investments and creation of requisite facilities; and

(d) the reasons for delay in taking action even though the Operation Flood Programme ended in March, 1996?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) There are a large number of villages/areas which have surplus milk production but yet are not covered by a milk cooperative. No detailed survey to identify such areas and the extent of surplus production has, however, been conducted.

(c) and (d) The National Dairy Development Board, the State Governments and the State Cooperative dairy federations have been consulted and advised to frame proposals for bringing such surplus milk production areas in the cooperative network.

Amendment in the present Animal Preservation Act, 1954

1879. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Gujarat has sent a draft bill suggesting amendment in the present Animal Preservation Act, 1954 which is pending with his Ministry for approval;

(b) if so, the present status of the Bill; and

(c) by when the final approval is expected to be given to the draft bill for introduction in the State Legislature?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (c) The Bombay Animal Preservation (Gujarat Amendment) Bill, 1997, was received in the Ministry of Home Affairs,